

RAY PRESENTS



GRACIE FIELDS, Maureen O'Sullivan and Lucille Manners, together with Percy Faith, Al and Bob Harvey, plus a long list of artists, made up close to a four hours show at Eaton's Auditorium, Toronto, for the Star's Fresh Air Fund. For Gracie Fields and Maureen O'Sullivan the day started off with a civic reception by His Worship The Mayor in the Council Chambers. So many thousands turned out for the civic reception that it required the army, the navy and the air force, plus the police force to pilot the stars through the crowds.

The largest sum ever collected for either the Star's Fresh Air Fund for underprivileged children, or the Santa Claus Fund was collected, finally reaching over \$8,000.

The Canadian Moving Picture Industry's "Win The War" Committee sent Gracie Fields and Maureen O'Sullivan each a bouquet of roses and carnations in a welcome to Toronto and a greeting.

Gracie Fields is touring Canada under the auspices of the British and Canadian Navy Leagues. There has been quite some publicity in the newspapers concerning Gracie Fields with statements alleging that she and Monty Banks, her husband, had left England with large sums of money, jewellery, etc. It is not my intention to repeat any of these stories. Gracie Fields is too grand a woman, too big a person not to be remembered for all her bigness, her generosity and charitable impulses which have consistently outlined her whole public life.

She had a most satisfactory reply to any of the reports which have been made; and all I can say about Gracie Fields is that thousands of children and grown-ups remember and will always remember Gracie Fields for her artistry and for the generosity of her character.

MR. D. H. GIBSON, President of The Navy League, introduced Gracie and her ears certainly must have burned for Mr. Gibson's talk of close to five minutes was mostly about Gracie Fields and her tour through Canada to help the Navy League. Gracie has given her services to the British Government for the duration of the War.

Her numbers were thunderously applauded and it was only when Denton Massey, M.P., who was Master of Ceremonies, begged the audience to permit Gracie to leave the stage that the audience reluctantly stopped applauding and calling for "more".

Dainty Maureen O'Sullivan received an ovation that challenged the roar of M-G-M's Leo, The Lion. Maureen looked more petite than on the screen, a wisp of a woman dressed in a lacy black frock, who talked to that big audience just as intimately and friendly as if assembled in her own home. Maureen said that she would not attempt to be glamorous and vocal, as was Lucille Manners with her glorious voice, nor like Gracie Fields, the latter who had so delighted everyone there with her singing and characterizations. Maureen chose to talk about what the Star's Fresh Air Fund was trying to do for little children, what the Royal Canadian Navy, the British Navy, the Army and the R.A.F. and the people of the British Empire were trying to do for the children of the world. Fighting to give them a chance to live.

MAUREEN O'SULLIVAN is the wife of Lieut. John Farrow, Director of Information for the Royal Canadian Navy. Miss O'Sullivan read a letter which she had written in reply to a reference which had appeared in a U. S. magazine which referred in a rather contemptuous manner to Canada's War Effort. It was an excellent reply and challenge to the criticism and left no doubts as to how Maureen O'Sullivan felt about Canada's War Effort.

Maureen's shy little personality immediately won the hearts of that vast audience and you could hear whispers around that auditorium, Irish whispers, "isn't she pretty, isn't she sweet, isn't she lovely, not a bit like a movie star," the latter which amused me the most. Now why was Maureen O'Sullivan "not a bit like a movie star"? Because Maureen was natural, unaffected, with no fluttering of eyelashes, nor any attempt to be other than herself, therein was her greatest charm, because Maureen is in herself a great little artist.

Gregory Clark, the Star's feature writer, who has returned to Canada after seeing the Realities of many a war-front, presented Maureen with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the Star and a Teddy Bear for her little son, Michael. The Teddy Bear was too much for Maureen, tears began to fall and all the audience shed a tear in gladness for little Michael who was safe in Canada, in gladness for the Star's Fresh Air Fund which would bring happiness to so many little children; and in gladness that the British Empire and the freedom-loving fighters of the world "suffered little children to come unto them" knowing that "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven".

LUCILLE MANNERS with her charming golden beauty and golden voice, soprano of the N.B.C., sang the Jewel Song from Faust, followed by "My Hero" from The Chocolate Soldier, and as another encore "I'll Follow My Secret Heart", the latter a great favorite with her radio audiences. She participated in this concert through the courtesy of Dr. Frank Black of the N.B.C.

During the program Denton Massey, in uniform, was at the mike, and as the reports of donations came in over the air, he read the donations which came from babies still to be born; and from a donor who was celebrating his birthday of 103.

I wish I could tell you all about the other artists, the orchestra there through the co-operation of the Musicians' Protective Association, etc., but now to our own Canadian Picture Pioneers Rodeo Show to be held in September, the date of our annual meeting, to be announced later.

The date of the Rodeo has been postponed because it looks as if we are going to have Gene Autrey, the singing cowboy, as our guest on this occasion; and to permit a sufficient time for the organization of all of the branches with appointment of their respective district managers across Canada.

REPORTS from Syd Taube, representing Canadian Picture Pioneers, reveal that the branches across Canada are being rapidly organized. Vancouver and the Maritimes are already set with A. J. Mason, district manager for Maritime Territory, and Wm. S. Jones for Vancouver.

The list of members now reaches 137 with several applications still before the Membership
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— Correspondents —
ROBERT LANSING.....Washington, D.C.
WARD SHAFESBURY.....London, England
A. L. FAIRWEATHER.....Saint John, N.B.
J. J. CONKLIN.....Winnipeg, Man.
BRUCE PEACOCK.....Regina, Sask.

ELIZABETH BERGNER IN WINNIPEG TO WORK ON FILM

Winnipeg, Man. — Exhausted after her long journey from England, Elizabeth Bergner, star of stage and screen, left strict orders to see no one, following her arrival in Winnipeg, by plane from Montreal.

Wearing wedge shoes, a cream flannel sports coat, and a handkerchief around her head, the diminutive actress looked tired after an almost uninterrupted voyage beginning with an Atlantic crossing under war-time conditions, followed by a train trip from the coast to Montreal, and completed by plane from Montreal to Winnipeg.

Here in Canada to play the part of an exiled German girl living near Winnipeg, in the British film "49th Parallel", Miss Bergner did not wish to make any statements until her director, Michael Powell, arrives from the west. She rested all day Sunday in her room at the Royal Alexandra Hotel, anticipating work on the film to begin shortly.

She did, however say to The Digest, that she found it hard to believe that she had been travelling almost in a straight line from Halifax to Winnipeg, pointing out that such vast spaces are incredible to a native of Europe, where distances between important centres are very short.

TAUBE IN MARITIMES

Saint John, N.B. — Syd Taube (Canadian Automatic Confections), Mrs. Taube and son Jerry were guests at the Admiral Beatty Hotel while in Saint John and left for Moncton and Halifax on the next link of their "across-Canada" trip. They have already completed a trip of 7,200 miles across the Dominion.

HOLD ROSE SHOW

Edmonton, Alta. — Walter P. Wilson, manager of the Capitol Theatre here, held his Eighth Annual Rose Show at the Capitol on Monday and Tuesday of this week. The general public was invited to visit the show.

A. J. Mason Elected Chairman Maritime Branch Picture Pioneers

R. S. RODDICK AND REGINALD MARCH SECRETARIES

Saint John, N.B. — A meeting of the Maritime Members of the Canadian Picture Pioneers was held here on Monday at the Admiral Beatty Hotel. Mr. Syd Taube, Travelling Delegate for the organization, who was also present in Vancouver at the first meeting of the branch out there, was on hand.

Among those who attended were the following: A. J. Mason, Springhill, Nova Scotia; R. S. Roddick, Halifax, N.S.; Jack Butler, Moncton, N.B.; Reginald March, F. G. Spencer, A. A. Fielding and A. E. Smith of Saint John N.B.

A. J. Mason was elected Chairman of the Branch, with R. S. Roddick (Famous Players), elected Secretary for Nova Scotia and Reginald March (20th Century-Fox Branch Manager), as Secretary for New Brunswick.

The importance of the organization, and the fine work which the members can do, as shown by their first effort, the sponsorship of the Canadian Moving Picture Industry's "Win the War" Campaign, was stressed at the meeting. It was pointed out that the organization was determined to in every way continue its good work.

Those in the Maritimes who are interested in joining the Canadian Picture Pioneers and who have the necessary qualifications of 25 years service in the Moving Picture Industry should contact either Mr. Roddick or Mr. March.

GERMANY BANS M-G-M FILMS

Hollywood, Calif. — All Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer pictures have been banned in Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and Czechoslovakia, because of the production of "Escape" and "The Mortal Storm". 20th Century-Fox productions have also been banned, because of that company's production of "Four Sons" and "I Married A Nazi".

FIELDS IN CALGARY

Calgary, Alta. — Gracie Fields will appear at the Grandstand, Exhibition Grounds, on Tuesday, August 13th, at 8.30, in aid of the Navy League. This concert is one on her Navy League Coast-to-Coast Tour. Admission prices: \$2.00, \$1.50, \$1.00, 75c and 50c.

BUSINESS BETTER

Saint John, N.B. — Saint John has been experiencing cool weather lately and this has aided the theatres in the matter of attendance which has kept up instead of falling off to the extent usually experienced in the summer season.

Many tourists are in the city and they find the theatres pleasantly cool and attractive while the soldiers and sailors are also decidedly "movie-conscious".

MICKEY ROONEY IN B.C.

Vancouver, B.C. — Mickey Rooney is vacationing in British Columbia. He is spending most of his time here fishing, swimming and resting up. This is the first time he has been in Canada for a vacation, the only other time he crossed the border to Windsor was when he visited Detroit for the "Young Tom Edison" premiere. Other recent Hollywood visitors were Spencer Tracy and Frank Morgan.

PUBLICITY ON "NORTHWEST"

Winnipeg, Man. — Publicity has been started on the showing of Cecil B. De Mille's latest film, "Northwest Mounted Police", with cuts and story on the film. Picture's opening, according to the Winnipeg Free Press, is October 25th, with Gary Cooper, Cecil B. De Mille and Madeleine Carroll on hand for the opening. This report is not confirmed.

SMITH IN "LIFE"

Saint John, N.B. — Abe Smith, Manager of Regal Films Ltd., Saint John, spent a week recently in New York and attended the popular Broadway show "Du Barry Was A Lady". On his return to Saint John he was amused to see a photograph of the audience on that special evening, published in the magazine Life and showing himself in the audience which was singing "The Star Spangled Banner".

STAMP SALE REPORT

Lindsay, Ont. — The Kent Theatre at Lindsay, Ontario, sold War Savings Stamps and Certificates to the value of \$1,000.00—as reported by Manager Jane Edmonds.

OPERATOR SERIOUSLY ILL

Regina, Sask. — George McLeod, Metropolitan operator, is seriously ill in a Regina hospital.

RICHARD GREENE IN CANADA TO ENLIST

Vancouver, B.C. — Richard Greene, 20th Century-Fox star, was mobbed by over a thousand enthusiastic fans when he arrived at the Vancouver Airport this week. He made the trip in an effort to secure a commission in the Seaforth Highlanders Regiment. Later he visited his mother who resides in Victoria.